A Copy of an Excellent LETTER
Wrote by the Reverend
Mr. *J. E.* of *Guilford*, Deceaſed, to his Brother
Mr. *B. E.* of *Roxbury*,
Found in the Study of the Reverend

Mr. *Joſeph Belcher*,

Late of *Dedham*, ſince his Deceaſe.
The Second Edition very carefully corrected
from Five ſeveral Manuſcripts:
BEING
An Anſwer to this Queſtion,
How to Live in this World, ſo as to Live in Heaven?

DEAR BROTHER,

YOURS I received, and thought on. The Queſtion, is, *How ſo to Live in this World, as yet to Live in Heaven?* It is one of the common Places of my Heart, that I have often occaſion to ſtudy, and therefore takes me not unprovided. It is hard to keep the Helm up among ſo many Croſs Winds and Edyes, and Out-Lands and Boarding of Creatures, as we meet withal upon this Sea of Glaſs and Fire. And truly that Man knoweth not his own Heart who finds it not difficult to break thro' the Entanglements of the World. Creature *Smiles* ſtop and intice away the Affections from JESUS CHRIST: Creature *Frowns incompaſs* * and tem-

* Or, *incompoſe*.

tempeſtuate the Spirit, then it thinks it doth well to be Angry: Both ways Grace is a looſer. We had all need to Watch and Pray, leſt we enter into theſe Temptations. The Greateſt of your Conflicts and Cauſes of your Complaints, ſeem here to have their Original. Temptations follow Tempers. As there are two Predominant Qualities in the Temper of every Body; ſo there are two Predominant Sins in the Temper of every Heart: And *Pride* is one in all Men in the World: the Reſt is about *Particulars* *.

I will tell you Familiarly what GOD hath done for my Soul, and in what Tract my Soul keeps towards Himſelf. (1) I am come to a Concluſion to look for no Great Matters in the World, but to Know JESUS CHRIST and Him Crucified. I make beſt Way in a Low Gale. A high Spirit, and a high Sail together will be dangerous: and therefore I prepare to Live Low: I deſire not much, I Pray againſt it. My ſtudy is my Calling: ſo much as to attend that without Diſtraction, I am bound to plead for; and more I deſire not. By my ſecluded retirements, I have advantage to obſerve how every days occaſions Inſenſibly wear off the Heart from GOD, and bury it in it Self; which they that ever live in the Noiſe and Lumber of the World, cannot be ſenſible of. (2) I have learned to ſee a Need of every thing GOD gives me; and to Need nothing that he denies me. There is no diſpenſation tho' Croſs and Afflictive, but either in it or after it, I find I could not be without it: And nothing that I am without, whether it be taken from me, or not given to me; but ſooner or later

* Some Copies have *Partticulars* and others *Futurities*.

er GOD quiets me in Himſelf without it. (3) I ſt all my Care on the LORD, and Live ſecurely the Wiſdom and Care of my heavenly Father. y Ways are you know, in ſome ſenſe hedged up ith Thorns, and grow darker and darker daily; But et I miſtruſt not my good GOD in the leaſt, and ive more quiet in the abſence of all, by Faith, than ſhould do, I am perſwaded, if I poſſeſſed them. I hink the LORD deals kindly with me to make me elieve for all my Mercies, before I have them: they ill then be *Iſaacs*, Sons of Laughter. For the leſs *Reaſon* hath to Work upon, the more freely *Faith* caſts Self on the faithfulneſs of GOD. I find that whilſt aith is Steddy nothing can diſquiet me; and when aith Totters, nothing can Eſtabliſh me. If I ramble mongſt Means and Creatures, I am preſently loſt, and an come to no End; But if I ſtay my Self on GOD nd leave Him to work in His own Way and Time, I am at reſt, and can lye down and ſleep in a Promiſe, tho' a Thouſand riſe up againſt me.

Therefore my way is not to caſt before hand, but to Work with GOD by the Day. Sufficient to the day is the Work thereof. I find ſo much to do continually with my Calling and my Heart, that I have no Time to puzzle my ſelf with Peradventures and Futurities. As for the State of the Times it is very *Gloomy** and Tempeſtuous: But why do the Heathen Rage? Faith lyes at Anchor in the midſt of the Waves, and believes the Accompliſhment of the Promiſe, thro' all theſe Overturnings, Confuſions, and ſeeming Impoſſibilities. Upon this GOD I do Live, who is our GOD

* Some Copies have it *Raging*.

GOD for ever, and will Guide us to the Death: Me thinks I lye becalm'd in His Bosom, as *Luther* in such a Case: I am not much troubled, Let CHRIST see to it. I know Prophecies are now Dark, the Books are Sealed, and Men have all been deceived, and every Vision fails; yet GOD doth continue Faithful; it's He that Promiseth, who will also do it. I believe these Dark Times are the Womb of a Bright Morning.

Many things more I might have added, but Enough. Oh! Brother, keep close to GOD, and then you need fear Nothing: Maintain Secret and Intimate Acquaintance with Him; and then a little of the Creature will go a great Way. Take Time for Duties in Private: Croud not Religion into a Corner of the Day. There is a *Dutch* Proverb, *No body will get by Thieving, or loose by Praying.* Lay up all your Good in GOD, so as to Over-balance the Sweetness and Bitterness of all Creatures. Spend no Time in fore-hand Contrivances for this World: they never Succeed; GOD will run His Dispensations another Way. Self-Contrivances are the Effects of Unbelief: I can speak by Experience, Would Men spend those Hours they wear out in Plots and Devices, in Communion with GOD, and leave all on Him by Venturesome Believing, they would have more Peace and Comfort. I Leave you with your GOD and mine: The LORD JESUS be with your Spirit: Pray for your *own Soul*; Pray for *Jerusalem*; and Pray hard for your poor *Brother*.

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Guilford, May 18. 1664. *J. E.*

Boston: Printed in the Year 1738.